

House File 114 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 114
BY ABDUL-SAMAD

A BILL FOR

1 An Act prohibiting disconnection of utility service under
2 certain circumstances for a designated annual time period
3 for utility customers eligible to participate in specified
4 programs.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 476.20, subsection 2, Code 2015, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 2. The board shall establish rules requiring a regulated
4 public utility furnishing gas or electricity to include in
5 the utility's notice of pending disconnection of service a
6 written statement advising the customer that the customer
7 may be eligible to participate in the low income home energy
8 assistance program or weatherization assistance program
9 administered by the division of community action agencies of
10 the department of human rights. The written statement shall
11 list the address and telephone number of the local agency
12 which is administering the customer's low income home energy
13 assistance program and the weatherization assistance program.
14 The written statement shall also state that the customer
15 is advised to contact the public utility to settle any of
16 the customer's complaints with the public utility, but if a
17 complaint is not settled to the customer's satisfaction, the
18 customer may file the complaint with the board. The written
19 statement shall include the address and phone number of the
20 board. If the notice of pending disconnection of service
21 applies to a residence, the written statement shall advise that
22 the disconnection does not apply from November 1 through April
23 1, or from June 1 through September 1 during periods of extreme
24 heat, for a resident who is a "head of household", as defined
25 by law, and who has been certified to the public utility by the
26 local agency which is administering the low income home energy
27 assistance program and weatherization assistance program as
28 being eligible for either the low income home energy assistance
29 program or weatherization assistance program, and that if such
30 a resident resides within the serviced residence, the customer
31 should promptly have the qualifying resident notify the local
32 agency which is administering the low income home energy
33 assistance program and weatherization assistance program.
34 The board shall establish rules requiring that the written
35 notice contain additional information as it deems necessary

1 and appropriate. The board shall also adopt rules determining
 2 temperature ranges and durations which constitute "periods of
 3 extreme heat" for purposes of this section.

4 Sec. 2. Section 476.20, subsection 3, paragraph b, Code
 5 2015, is amended to read as follows:

6 b. A qualified applicant for the low income home energy
 7 assistance program or the weatherization assistance program who
 8 is also a "head of household", as defined in section 422.4,
 9 subsection 7, shall be promptly certified by the local agency
 10 administering the applicant's program to the applicant's
 11 public utility that the resident is a "head of household" as
 12 defined in section 422.4, subsection 7, and is qualified for
 13 the low income home energy assistance program or weatherization
 14 assistance program. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a public
 15 utility furnishing gas or electricity shall not disconnect
 16 service from November 1 through April 1, or from June 1 through
 17 September 1 during periods of extreme heat as provided in
 18 subsection 2, to a residence which has a resident that has been
 19 certified under this paragraph.

20 EXPLANATION

21 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
 22 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

23 This bill prohibits a regulated public utility furnishing
 24 gas or electricity from disconnecting utility service under
 25 certain circumstances from June 1 through September 1 annually.

26 The bill provides that utility service may not be
 27 disconnected during the June 1 through September 1 time
 28 frame during periods of "extreme heat" for residential
 29 customers eligible to participate in the low income home
 30 energy assistance program or weatherization assistance program
 31 administered by the division of community action agencies
 32 of the department of human rights. Currently, a similar
 33 prohibition against disconnection exists applicable to such
 34 customers during the time frame of November 1 through April 1
 35 annually, regardless of temperature requirements. The bill

1 requires the Iowa utilities board to adopt administrative rules
2 determining temperature ranges and durations constituting
3 "periods of extreme heat".